

KSARC NEWS

KIKA DE LA GARZA SUBTROPICAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH CENTER
A RESEARCH LABORATORY OF THE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
SERVICE OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



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FROM JERRY'S DESK TO YOURS

What happened to 2001? For those of you that missed the Christmas party – Santa and Elvis were great. Well it is now 2002 and I hope the staff had a Merry Christmas and begin 2002 with a great New Year's Eve party. I have always said that New Year's Eve is an adult holiday to be shared with your wife (husband) or girl (boy) friend. *Kids go to bed.* The kids get all the other holidays. Diane and I spent our New Years Eve at the Valley Race Track (as best I remember they had a great fireworks display to usher in 2002). Congratulations to the Beneficial Insects Research Unit. They were the 2001 winners of the AREA award for "Diversity Enhancement in Agricultural Research".

Mandatory Security Measures to be implemented at all ARS locations. We began to work on our plans this week. Our proposed plans are due by March 15 and each of you will see our proposal before it is sent to the AREA. The acts of terrorism committed September 11, 2001 has changed forever the way we do business. Key points are "exterior doors on all federal offices and laboratory buildings will be secured at all times", "all personnel while on site must wear picture identification

badges", "all visitors and contractors to be signed in and out of the location", "we must develop an Occupant Emergency Procedure Plan", and "procedures must be developed to receive and process all mail". These are the key elements and we will be working to develop the KSARC plan. Remember that Field Day is scheduled for April 18, 2002. Our field day sub-committees are hard at work and Chairman Fred Gomez is keeping everything going in the right direction. Field Day will concentrate on our six research groups namely – Sustainable Agricultural Production Systems, Quarantine Treatments and Product Quality, Honey Bees, Biocontrol of Insects and Weeds, Remote Sensing of Agricultural Problems, and the Ecology and Control of the Cotton Boll Weevil. Each of these groups will have their own tent at the North Farm and we will use trailers to move the crowd from tent to tent. Lunch will be served and Dr Lester's sub-committee has developed a wonderful menu.



RESEARCH AT KSARC

DR. CHARLES VINCENT, RESEARCH ENTOMOLOGIST WITH AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD CANADA IN QUEBEC, VISITED DR. GUY HALLMAN FOR 3 WEEKS IN JANUARY TO COLLABORATE ON AN ANNUAL REVIEW OF ENTOMOLOGY ARTICLE ON PHYSICAL PEST CONTROLS TO BE PUBLISHED IN JANUARY 2003. THE PHOTO SHOWS HIM SERVING CAKE TO HIS NEWLY FOUND FRIENDS AT KSARC DURING HIS FINAL DAY HERE, JANUARY 24TH. WHILE HERE HE ALSO PRESENTED A SEMINAR ON PHYSICAL PEST CONTROLS AND WAS AN AVID VOLLEYBALL PLAYER.



**DR. LARRY ZIBILSKE, INTEGRATED FARMING AND NATURAL RESOURCES RESEARCH UNIT, GAVE A LECTURE AT THE HOLISTIC RESOURCES MANAGEMENT OF TEXAS, INC. CONFERENCE IN EDINBURG ON JANUARY 24TH ENTITLED: "HARNESSING THE POWER OF SOIL MICROBES".

**DR. DON HE RECEIVED A SCIENTIFIC POSTER PRESENTATION AWARD FOR THE BEST POSTER PRESENTED AT THE 56TH ANNUAL MEETING FOR THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY ON JANUARY 22, 2002. THE POSTER TITLE IS "EFFECT OF COMMERCIAL SEX PHEROMONE LURES OF DIAMONDBACK MOTH (LEPIOPTERA: PLUTELLIDAE) IN THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY, TEXAS". THE RESEARCH WORK WAS DONE IN COLLABORATION WITH DR. T.X. LIU, TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY.

**DR. PATTI ELZEN, BENEFICIAL INSECTS RESEARCH UNIT, HONEY BEE RESEARCH, ATTENDED 2 NATIONAL BEEKEEPING CONFERENCES: AMERICAN HONEY PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION AND THE AMERICAN BEEKEEPING FEDERATION BOTH TO PRESENT THE SUMMARY OF 2001 RESEARCH.



NEW EMPLOYEES AT KSARC

MR. Rolando Dominguez joined the KSARC family on January 14, 2002 as a Biological Science Aid for Dr. Shoil Greenberg, Integrated Farming and Natural Resources Research Unit.

DEAR AWARD GIVEN TO BENEFICIAL INSECTS

CONGRATULATIONS to the Beneficial Insects Research Unit which was selected as the recipient of the FY2001 Southern Plains Area Diversity Enhancement in Agricultural Research (DEAR) Award. The goals of the DEAR program are to decrease under representation in the hiring and employment of Hispanic males and females, African-American males, and individuals with disabilities.



Dr. Guy Hallman Displays Poster at ESA Meeting

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THIS POSTER (LEFT), BY GUY J. HALLMAN, A RESEARCH ENTOMOLOGIST IN COMMODITY TREATMENT WITH THE USDA-ARS CROP QUALITY AND FRUIT INSECTS RESEARCH UNIT IN WESLACO, TEXAS, EXPLAINS RADIATION INDUCED GIGANTISM IN SWEETPOTATO WEEVIL!!! THE MECHANICAL INSECT LIT UP AND MOVED ITS BUILDING- CRUSHING MANDIBLES WHEN VISITORS APPROACHED, AND THE POSTER FEATURED DESCRIPTIONS AND PICTURES OF MONSTER INSECT MOVIES. THE SENSATIONAL AND AMUSING POSTER, THE ACTUAL RESEARCH, IRRADIATION TREATMENT AGAINST SWEETPOTATO WEEVIL, WAS DETAILED.



Admin News

BY MARI GOMEZ



OVERVIEW OF LEAVE LAWS

FAMILY-FRIENDLY LEAVE POLICIES FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

DO YOU NEED TIME OFF FROM WORK FOR PERSONAL, FAMILY, OR MEDICAL NEEDS?

ARE YOU CONFUSED ABOUT YOUR OPTIONS?

THE FOLLOWING MAY HELP TO PUT THINGS INTO PERSPECTIVE. CALL NOELIA MARTINEZ FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON EACH OF THESE LEAVE POLICIES.

ANNUAL LEAVE

ANNUAL LEAVE IS DESIGNED TO GIVE YOU VACATION PERIODS FOR REST AND RELAXATION AND TO PROVIDE TIME OFF FOR YOUR PERSONAL BUSINESS OR FAMILY NEEDS. YOUR ANNUAL LEAVE MUST BE SCHEDULED AND APPROVED IN ADVANCE.

SICK LEAVE

SICK LEAVE MAY BE USED WHEN YOU--

RECEIVE MEDICAL, DENTAL, OR OPTICAL EXAMINATION OR TREATMENT; ARE INCAPACITATED BY PHYSICAL OR MENTAL ILLNESS, INJURY, PREGNANCY, OR CHILDBIRTH; WOULD, BECAUSE OF EXPOSURE TO A COMMUNICABLE DISEASE, JEOPARDIZE THE HEALTH OF OTHERS BY YOUR PRESENCE ON THE JOB; OR MUST BE ABSENT FROM WORK FOR ADOPTION-RELATED ACTIVITIES.

IN ADDITION, YOU MAY USE A LIMITED AMOUNT* OF SICK LEAVE TO--

PROVIDE CARE FOR A FAMILY MEMBER AS THE RESULT OF PHYSICAL OR MENTAL ILLNESS, INJURY, PREGNANCY, CHILDBIRTH, OR MEDICAL, DENTAL, OR OPTICAL EXAMINATION OR TREATMENT; OR MAKE ARRANGEMENTS NECESSITATED BY THE DEATH OF A FAMILY MEMBER OR ATTEND THE FUNERAL OF A FAMILY MEMBER.

* IF YOU ARE A FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE, YOU MAY USE UP TO 40 HOURS (5 DAYS) OF YOUR SICK LEAVE EACH LEAVE YEAR FOR GENERAL FAMILY CARE AND BEREAVEMENT PURPOSES. AN ADDITIONAL 64 HOURS (8 DAYS) MAY BE USED AS LONG AS YOU MAINTAIN A BALANCE OF AT LEAST 80 HOURS OF SICK LEAVE IN YOUR SICK LEAVE ACCOUNT. AND IN CASES OF A SERIOUS MEDICAL CONDITION FOR A FAMILY MEMBER, AN ADDITIONAL 47 DAYS MAY BE USED AS LONG AS THE 80 HOUR SICK LEAVE BALANCE IS MAINTAINED. (CONTINUED ON Pg. 4)

PART-TIME EMPLOYEES AND EMPLOYEES WITH UNCOMMON TOURS

OF DUTY ARE ALSO COVERED, AND THE AMOUNT OF SICK LEAVE THEY MAY USE FOR THESE PURPOSES IS PRO-RATED.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

UNDER THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT OF 1993 (FMLA), COVERED EMPLOYEES ARE ENTITLED TO A TOTAL OF 12 ADMINISTRATIVE WORKWEEKS OF UNPAID LEAVE (LEAVE WITHOUT PAY) DURING ANY 12-MONTH PERIOD FOR—

THE BIRTH OF A SON OR DAUGHTER AND CARE OF THE NEWBORN; THE PLACEMENT OF A SON OR DAUGHTER WITH YOU FOR ADOPTION OR FOSTER CARE; THE CARE OF YOUR SPOUSE, SON, DAUGHTER, OR PARENT WITH A SERIOUS HEALTH CONDITION; AND YOUR OWN SERIOUS HEALTH CONDITION THAT MAKES YOU UNABLE TO PERFORM THE DUTIES OF YOUR POSITION.

UPON RETURN FROM FMLA LEAVE, YOU MUST BE RETURNED TO THE SAME OR EQUIVALENT POSITION. WHILE ON FMLA LEAVE, YOU ARE ENTITLED TO MAINTAIN HEALTH BENEFITS COVERAGE. IF YOU ARE ON LEAVE WITHOUT PAY UNDER THE FMLA, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYING THE EMPLOYEE SHARE OF THE HEALTH BENEFITS PREMIUM.

YOU MAY CHOOSE TO SUBSTITUTE ANNUAL LEAVE FOR UNPAID LEAVE UNDER THE FMLA. YOU MAY ALSO SUBSTITUTE SICK LEAVE IN THOSE SITUATIONS IN WHICH THE USE OF SICK LEAVE IS PERMITTED.

LEAVE FOR BONE-MARROW OR ORGAN DONATION

AS A FEDERAL EMPLOYEE, YOU ARE ENTITLED TO USE 7 DAYS OF PAID LEAVE (EXCUSED ABSENCE) EACH CALENDAR YEAR (IN ADDITION TO ANNUAL OR SICK LEAVE) TO SERVE AS A BONE-MARROW DONOR AND UP TO 30 DAYS OF PAID LEAVE AS AN ORGAN DONOR.

LEAVE SHARING

LEAVE TRANSFER PROGRAMS ALLOW FEDERAL EMPLOYEES TO DONATE ANNUAL LEAVE TO OTHER FEDERAL EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE MEDICAL EMERGENCIES AND WHO HAVE EXHAUSTED THEIR OWN LEAVE. LEAVE BANKS ALLOW EMPLOYEES TO CONTRIBUTE A SPECIFIED AMOUNT OF ANNUAL LEAVE YEARLY TO THEIR AGENCY LEAVE BANK. LEAVE BANK MEMBERS WITH MEDICAL EMERGENCIES CAN WITHDRAW LEAVE FROM THE BANK IF THEY EXHAUST THEIR OWN LEAVE. FEDERAL LEAVE POLICIES CAN WORK TOGETHER TO HELP YOU MANAGE YOUR WORK AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES.

PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT BY ED STEIN

WHAT IS THE UNIVERSAL WASTE RULE?

THE UNIVERSAL WASTE RULE, PROMULGATED BY EPA, WAS DESIGNED TO REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF HAZARDOUS WASTE ITEMS GOING TO MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE LANDFILLS, PROMOTE RECYCLING, AND PROPER DISPOSAL OF CERTAIN HAZARDOUS WASTES.

WHAT IS UNIVERSAL WASTE?

UNIVERSAL WASTE IS A SPECIFIC TYPE OF HAZARDOUS WASTE THAT IS SUBJECT TO MORE RELAXED STANDARDS OF ACCUMULATION, RECORD KEEPING AND SHIPPING REQUIREMENTS THAN THOSE OF "NORMAL" HAZARDOUS WASTES.

WHAT TYPE OF WASTES ARE CONSIDERED TO BE UNIVERSAL WASTES?

BATTERIES SUCH AS NICKEL-CADMUM, AND SMALL SEALED LEAD-ACID BATTERIES, FOUND IN MANY COMMON ITEMS IN BUSINESSES, HOME, INCLUDING ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT, MOBILE PHONES, PORTABLE COMPUTERS, AND EMERGENCY BACKUP LIGHTING. (CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

ST. VALENTINE'S DAY LEGENDS

On February 14th almost everyone, with the exception of Charlie Brown, and maybe several others, will receive a card spouting a big red heart, filled with sweet tidings. In other words, a Valentine's Day card, as they have become known since they were introduced in the eighteenth century.

Valentine's Day is a special day that has been set aside in order to honor "love". It is most famous for being a time of celebrating "romantic love". So, as the 14th of February approaches, many will begin plans to find that right card, order those flowers, or make reservations for that candlelight dinner. Yet, few will stop and ponder along the way why this date is singled out, or just who this Valentine fellow was that he should have a day named after him.



Who was Valentine? This question is not an easy one to answer. Depending on which book you read, you might find one author making the case that there were two different men named Valentine whose lives were mixed together to form one legend, and another arguing that two different legends arose about the same man. Even still, another author might say that there were three men named Valentine.

Here are several synopsis, or different stories.....

- ♥ Valentine was a Roman priest who was martyred during the persecution of Claudius the Goth around A.D. 269 or 270 and buried on the Flaminian Way.
- ♥ Valentine was a bishop of Terni martyred in Rome.
- ♥ Valentine as a young, though unsaved Christian, helped other Christians during a time of persecution. He was caught and put in jail, became a believer there and was clubbed to death for this on February 14, 269. While in prison, he is said to have sent messages to his friends saying "Remember Your Valentine" and "I love You".
- ♥ In one story, it is said that Valentine was a priest that secretly married couples, defying the law of Emperor Claudius, which temporarily forbade marriages.
- ♥ Valentine was imprisoned for refusing to worship pagan gods. Making friends with the jailer's daughter, he is said to have cured her through prayer, and on the date of his execution (Feb. 14th) he is said to have written her a note signed "Your Valentine".

The one thing we can be sure of is that at least one person by the name of Valentine did live and that he was killed for being a Christian. Beyond this, we are on shaky ground.

The 14th of February was set apart as the special day to remember Saint Valentine. This was one day before the Roman feast of Lupercalia, a pagan love festival. In 496 A.D. Pope Gelasius changed Lupercalia from the 15th to the 14th to try and stop the pagan celebration. The church realized that there was nothing wrong with celebrating love, only the pagan elements insulted God. Lupercalia was done away with, but it had left its mark on Saint Valentine's Day. Valentine had become known as the patron of lovers.

Part of the Roman festival of Lupercalia was the putting of a girl's name in a box and letting the boys draw them out. These couples were supposedly paired off for the whole year. A similar practice was begun in the fourteenth century. A sweetheart was chosen for a day by lot. This was done to correspond with the belief that the springtime mating of birds took place on Valentine's Day. Messages sent between these randomly chosen pairs were a forerunner of

the modern day Valentine's Day Card. Specially printed cards for Valentine's were just becoming common by the 1780's. They were a big hit in Germany where they were called "Freundschaftskarten, or "friendship cards."

So, should we celebrate Valentine's Day? Absolutely. Though we're not quite sure who Valentine was, we certainly know that God approves of love, even romantic love. Let's just make sure that Valentine's Day is an extra special day to display even more love than usual to those around us, and not our only day to show love this year.



JANUARY/FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



JANUARY		
MARTIN AVILA	YEDIRA BLANCO	JIM BROCKINGTON
ART CAVAZOS	EMILIO CHAVEZ	RENE DAVIS
GARY ELZEN	JIM FORWARD	SONIA GALLEGOS
JULIAN GARCIA	ELI MORENO	RAUL RIVERA
MAURA RODRIGUEZ	ELVIS	DONALD THOMAS

FEBRUARY		
JOSE BAUTISTA	NOE BUENROSTRO	JOSE GALVAN
REGINALD FLETCHER	DANIEL GARCIA	ROY MEDRANO
REYES GARCIA III	LAMBERT KANGA	NOEMI MARTINEZ
ANNETTE MANZANARES	ROBERT MEYER	RAUL RIVERA
SANTOS VILLARREAL	GEORGE WASHINGTON	ABE LINCOLN



CONGRATULATIONS GO OUT TO MR. ISAAC DOMINGUEZ OF THE BENEFICIAL INSECTS RESEARCH UNIT. ON DECEMBER 22, 2001, HE GRADUATED FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS-PAN AM WITH A BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN BIOLOGY, WITH A MINOR IN ENGLISH. ISAAC HAS WORKED WITH BIRU SINCE AUGUST OF 1996 AND HE IS CURRENTLY ASSISTING DR. GARY ELZEN. HIS FUTURE GOAL IS TO RETURN TO THE UNIVERSITY AND PURSUE A MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN BIOLOGY. WE AT BIRU AND KSARC ARE VERY PROUD OF HIM. WAY TO GO, ISAAC!!

PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT BY ED STEIN (CONTINUED)

AGRICULTURAL PESTICIDES THAT HAVE BEEN RECALLED OR BANNED FROM USE, ARE OBSOLETE, HAVE BECOME DAMAGED, OR ARE NO LONGER NEEDED DUE TO CHANGES IN CROPPING PATTERNS OR OTHER FACTORS.

THERMOSTATS, WHICH CAN CONTAIN AS MUCH AS 3 GRAMS OF LIQUID MERCURY AND ARE LOCATED IN ALMOST ANY BUILDING, INCLUDING COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, AGRICULTURAL, COMMUNITY, AND HOUSEHOLD BUILDINGS.

FLUORESCENT LAMPS AND HIGH-DENSITY DISCHARGE LAMPS THAT CONTAIN MERCURY AND HEAVY METALS HAVE ALSO BEEN INCLUDED AS UNIVERSAL WASTES WHEN SPENT.

WHO IS AFFECTED BY THIS RULE?

LARGE AND SMALL BUSINESSES THAT ARE REGULATED UNDER THE RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND RECOVERY ACT (RCRA) THAT GENERATE UNIVERSAL WASTES HAVE BEEN REQUIRED TO HANDLE THESE MATERIALS AS HAZARDOUS WASTES.

HOUSEHOLDS, WHICH ARE NOT REGULATED UNDER RCRA ALSO GENERATE UNIVERSAL WASTES AND ARE ALLOWED TO DISPOSE OF THESE WASTES IN THE TRASH. THE NEW MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE LANDFILLS ARE DESIGNED TO HANDLE SMALL AMOUNTS OF HAZARDOUS WASTES.

COMMUNITIES IN STATES THAT ADOPT THIS RULE CAN WORK WITH BUSINESSES AND RESIDENTS TO FACILITATE THE PROPER RECYCLING OR DISPOSAL OF UNIVERSAL WASTES.

WHAT CAN I DO?

AT HOME, AT YOUR BUSINESS, OR AT YOUR JOB

1. DO NOT DISPOSE OF YOUR UNIVERSAL WASTE TOGETHER WITH YOUR HOUSEHOLD WASTE.
2. SEGREGATE YOUR UNIVERSAL WASTE ACCORDINGLY.
3. CALL YOUR CITY'S PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT AND INQUIRE ABOUT THEIR UNIVERSAL WASTE PROGRAM OR ON YOUR JOB, YOUR EMPLOYER'S PROGRAM.
4. EDUCATE AND INFORM YOUR EMPLOYEES OR CHILDREN AT HOME ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PREVENTING POLLUTION OF OUR AIR, WATER, AND SOIL THROUGH RECYCLING OR PROPER DISPOSAL OF UNIVERSAL WASTES.

SOURCE: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY